

INSTALLation Notes

A single theme this issue. Written by Dr Amy E Zelmer, formerly Dean Faculty of Health Science, Central Queensland University (E-mail: A.Zelmer@CQU.edu.au) it's a good example of information sources on the web. The URLs were correct mid-July 1998.

Health Information On The Net For Travellers

Those who are planning a trip overseas are usually advised to see that their immunisation is up to date and to obtain basic medication for handling health emergencies, especially if they will be travelling off the beaten track. But where does one find current, authoritative information? Conditions often change rapidly and advice which was suitable for a trip to India last year may be quite unsuitable for someone planning a trip to Mexico this year.

There are a large number of relevant sites on the world wide web; some offer highly specialised information, others are geared towards particular geographic areas. This list is probably far from complete, but offers some starting points with links to other areas.

Government Sites

A good place for Australians to begin is with the Consular Travel Advice provided by the Australian Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade:
http://www.dfat.gov.au/consular/advice/advices_mnu.html

This site provides both general advice (passports, insurance, etc.) and health advice for travellers as well as advice with regard to specific countries. This latter chiefly provides information on civil unrest and related hazards but currently also includes advice for those travelling to the UK about potential difficulties in obtaining medical treatment in the United Kingdom. The Consular Newsletter, also found at this site, contains information on current problems in local areas (for example the risk of malaria and bilharzia for visitors to the Kruger National Park).

It can sometimes be instructive to see what other countries have posted as advice to their nationals. The Australian site noted above also provides links to such sites.

The Canadian Dept of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Travel Information and Advisory Reports:
http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/graphics/cosmos/cntry_e.htm

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office Travel Advice
http://www.fco.gov.uk/reference/travel_advice/countries.html

The U.S. State Department "Travel Warnings":
<http://travel.state.gov/travel-warnings.html>

A great deal of information about disease conditions in various locales can be found through the Center for Disease Control CDC Travel Information page:
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/travel.html>

This site is frequently updated and provides information in both geographical recommendation form as well as by disease category. There is also a detailed section of Health Hints for the Traveler which covers all of the common concerns, but also includes information for disabled travellers, and other topics such as the risk of transmission of tuberculosis in aircraft, and cruise ship sanitation.

The World Health Organisation provides an International Travel and Health page:

http://jupiter.who.ch/programmes/emc/yellowbook/yb_home.htm in English, French and Spanish. It is the hypertext version of the WHO publication on Vaccination Requirements and Health Advice.

University Sites

A number of universities also have information on health and travelling.

The Medical College of Wisconsin International Travelers Clinic:
<http://www.intmed.mcw.edu/ITC/Health.html> which carries information on diseases and immunisations as well as notes on altitude sickness and motion sickness as well as suggestions for a traveler's medicine kit and advice on travelling while pregnant.

Princeton University's Outdoor Action site provides a detailed guide to high altitude acclimatisation and illnesses:

<http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/altitude.html>

A Pre-travel immunisation page has been developed by Dr Allan Yung of Melbourne. It also has information on the prevention of malaria and the prevention and treatment of diarrhoea:
http://hna.ffh.vic.gov.au/comm_dis/travel/pretrav/pretrav1.html

A companion page Infections in Returned Travelers is written primarily for physicians, but could also provide more general advice to those who develop unknown conditions after their return:

http://hna.ffh.vic.gov.au/comm_dis/travel/irt/trav1.html

Organisations

The American College of Emergency Physicians has produced a public education page Traveler's First Aid Kit which also contains a number of other basic suggestions: <http://www.acep.org/nssearch/PUBLIC/P1000400.HTM>

Commercial Sites

Even some of the commercial sites are recognising the importance of health information for travellers. For example the Diner's Club site has a Traveler's Aide page which includes information on staying healthy on long flights and includes links to other health-related pages as noted below:

http://www.dinersclub.com/diners_aide.html

Shoreland's Travel Health Online is a US-based company which provides information on a subscription basis: <http://www.tripprep.com/index.html>

The page of the Traveler's Medical and Vaccination Centre: <http://www.tmvc.com.au/> contains contact information (This is an Australian-based group of clinics) as well as a wide range of suggestions for everything from coping with jet lag to immunisation procedures and sexually transmitted diseases.

The Lonely Planet folks have a website Health: Pills, ills and bellyaches which provides basic laypersons information, particularly useful for those who will be travelling off the beaten track or on a low budget. The pages in their website indicate that Information verified by Traveler's Medical & Vaccination Centres, Australia: <http://www.onelyplanet.com/health/health.html>.

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